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ABSTRACT

In an effort to provide the people of Iowa with a clearer sense of the needs for improvement in the state's 15 public community colleges, this report examines problem areas and causes and presents recommendations for improving educational quality. First, a discussion is provided of four key problem areas identified through a survey of over 1,000 faculty members and subsequent focus group discussions, including: (1) teaching conditions, such as increases in enrollment, expanding curricula, lack of adequate funding, an increase in students drawn from the third quartile of ability, overworked faculty, use of part-time faculty, and limited facilities and equipment; (2) leadership and governance, discussing such problems as inconsistent and inexperienced leadership, faculty members failing to raise issues of quality, declining standards, and the inability of colleges to commit to decentralization; (3) the community college mission, highlighting confusion in redefining the mission and concerns about economic development and partnerships with business; and (4) the lack of opportunities for professional development. For each area, recommendations for improvement are listed. Causes of these problems are then examined, indicating that many are chronic, having existed in the colleges for 20 years, and are similar to those experienced by public K-12 education. Finally, suggestions for statewide action are made, including adequate financial support, pilot programs to improve governance, support for mentor programs, and the creation of five autonomous college districts. (MAB)

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A Report to the People of Iowa
From the Faculty of Iowa's Community Colleges

August 25, 1993

Iowa State Education Association

IC 930 393

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A MATTER OF QUALITY

A Report To the People of Iowa
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Introduction

Iowa's community colleges are recognized nationally for instruction, economic development and innovation. Our faculty, trustees and administrators are committed to improving the quality of life for those who have few opportunities. Our programs contribute to the culture, economy and vitality of communities throughout the state. Our students are sought out by business. Almost all of our graduates remain in Iowa.

But financial strength varies from district to district, since part of the budget depends on property taxes. Enrollments grow quickly without support for start-up costs in new programs. Many classes are too large. Unlicensed part-time faculty and adjuncts are overused at some colleges. The work load of Vocational/Technical faculty is far in excess of the full-time work load for other faculty. On a statewide basis, faculty salaries are below the national average for community colleges. Locally, faculty salaries are often below the average for public school teachers in the area.

Although there is appropriate leadership in some places, a transition to modern management remains to be made. Community colleges still compete with one another in a governance arrangement which has no center. Faculty and trustee groups are alienated from one another and rarely cooperate. Arts and Science faculty and Vocational/Technical faculty have often been in conflict.

Relationships with the Iowa Department of Education deteriorate whenever it mediates conflict, provides direction or asks for accountability. There is little partnership between community colleges and Regents universities. Legislators place the colleges last in priority -- after Regents universities and private colleges -- even though community colleges are growing more quickly, serve a unique group of students, and enroll as many students as either of the other sectors.

These problems have existed since community colleges were created over a quarter century ago. As they are chronic, they have undermined the mission of the colleges and prevented them from living up to their potential. This report – from Iowa's community college faculty to the people of Iowa -- is intended to break the stalemate of the status quo.

Method

We began with a questionnaire of one hundred items, which was sent to more than 1,000 faculty members throughout Iowa. From the responses, seven major concerns were identified. These were made into open-ended questions and taken to groups of faculty who were selected at random. Discussion in seven "focus groups" were transcribed and analyzed. A summary was drafted and submitted to the Higher Education Standing Committee of the Iowa State Education Association, which adopted recommendations. A final report was submitted and approved by the ISEA's Executive Board. Most of the report consists of direct quotations from faculty in their own words. Quotation marks were omitted since a majority of sentences would have required them. The result fairly represents the advice which community college faculty have for Iowans.

Our report begins with an examination of four areas where quality is a problem according to faculty: Conditions of Teaching, Leadership and Governance, Community College Mission, and Professional Growth Opportunities for Faculty. The second part identifies the causes of these chronic problems. The third part makes recommendations for solving them. Finally, we express a hope about what our colleges and teaching will be like at the end of this decade.

A. Identification of Problems

I. Conditions of Teaching

Students and Curriculum

Community college enrollments continue to increase. This places stress on faculty, facilities and finances. Although enrollments and new programs increase annually, the state does not provide start-up costs as they occur. Colleges must wait years to recapture start-up costs through a state aid formula which is never fully funded. Colleges must take money and faculty from existing programs when creating new programs. This reduces quality in all courses. It causes an overuse of part-time and adjunct faculty, shortages of space, and too many courses for faculty to teach effectively. It produces an overall drop in the quality of teaching, particularly at colleges where enrollment gains are largest.

At the same time as enrollments are increasing, the content of courses is changing. Enrollments are up in math and sciences on many campuses. There has been an increase in the teaching of higher order thinking. Subjects that were once "vocational" -- like auto mechanics -- now require high tech expertise. Even the term "vocational/technical" is obsolete. The curriculum has broadened into "applied technology" or "applied Arts and Sciences." This has created more and more program, with less and less time to cover it. As the curriculum expands, faculty try to cover too much. This lowers the quality of instruction.

Students are increasingly drawn from the third quartile of ability. This is as it should be, because it means that the "open door" policy of community colleges is working. But it also means that expensive "second-chance" programs are necessary. This is not an indictment of secondary schools, but a recognition that many who would have dropped out of high school or never gone to college now enroll at community colleges. Only eight percent of the student population at community colleges overlaps that of four-year colleges in Iowa on the basis of grades, ACT scores, degree expectation and socio-economic status.

The broadest range of student ability occurs in entry level courses. In such courses, no personal attention or individualized learning is possible. Remediation is provided through campus-based learning centers and individual tutorial programs. Some campuses provide learning centers for students with remediation needs, but paraprofessional assistance is not available in laboratory settings at all places.

Where limits on enrollment exist, they are set without consultation with faculty often by persons who lack an understanding of the instructional requirements of the courses which they are affecting. Decisions are unrelated to quality. Management-by-the-numbers counts more than quality or educational opportunity. Consequently, retention and graduation of students goes down as enrollment goes up -- making the "open door" policy a revolving door.

For example, students are assigned to a class where there are two students for each computer, which requires the instructor to teach the course twice. Or there are thirty students in one shop class, which requires more time for set-ups of equipment than is available for the class. Or eighty students are admitted to a lecture course designed for twenty students. Or there are thirty-four students in an English teacher's classes, which total 230 students. Or a rural community college has eighty students in one class. All these have occurred in Iowa's community colleges during the past year.

Faculty Work Load

The basis of faculty employment is "overload plus." Many faculty routinely work sixty hours per week and take work home on the weekend, to the detriment of family responsibilities. There is a stated maximum work load, but we may be assigned to work beyond the limit. In practice, this means that there is no maximum work load. When overload is averaged over a year or two, this can be a personal and educational disaster. In Arts and Sciences, a faculty member may teach fifteen different courses in a year. This is not professionally sound. Overload exists in instructional support as well. The caseload for counselors has doubled at one rural college, as enrollments increased. Paraprofessionals are not available on all campuses to assist with students who require remediation in laboratory settings. The result is "perpetual overload" for faculty.

In vocational/technical areas, faculty may teach ten preparations per semester. Faculty often teach thirty contact hours in a week, even though they need two to three hours more to prepare for each hour of teaching. Preparation time is unknown. Such a work load shortchanges both the faculty member and the student. As long as colleges "load up the wagon" on class size, educational quality will be reduced; students will be shortchanged; and drop-out rates will be unnecessarily high.

Even though some may teach thirty contact hours in vocational/technical education and agriculture, they get credit for sixteen or seventeen only. Work load in these areas is twice as large as the standard work load for other faculty -- as if technology were half as difficult to teach as other subjects or half as valuable. This policy treats some faculty as if they have twice as many hours in a day as others.

Inequities reduce morale and effectiveness. They create pressure as faculty attempt to cope with overload. They destroy personal time, and undermine family and community responsibilities. They pit one group of faculty against another, damaging collaboration and collegiality. Overload intensifies the most serious problem faced by faculty, lack of time. The present policies on work load and class size misuse faculty and damage instructional quality.

Use of Part-time Faculty

Colleges may use part-time and adjunct faculty to deal with overload, provide flexibility in scheduling and expand opportunity for students. Present licensure rules permit part-time faculty and adjuncts to teach without holding a valid teaching license. This permits persons to teach with no preparation, demonstrated aptitude or commitment to ethical practice. It also leads to reliance on the lecture as the sole instructional mode. Such conditions undermine quality.

Most part-time faculty do not keep regular office hours, attend faculty meetings, serve on committees or develop curriculum. Some do not have offices. Little effort is spent recruiting them, and almost no effort is spent evaluating them. Their main objective is to maintain enrollment in their classes. They are employed to promote flexibility and avoid paying fringe benefits. Such priorities undermine quality.

Given the demands of teaching in a community college, we doubt whether anyone can teach well on a part-time basis. Also, part-time work is unfair to those who are ready to work full-time or who have family responsibilities. Although some part-timers contribute a great deal and move on to full-time status, others remain in the role of "disposable dons" and "freeway fliers." At one college, forty percent is part-time and adjunct faculty. At another college, part-time faculty may be generating eighty-five percent of credit hours in state reimbursable (degree) programs. But one urban community college has no part-time faculty, except for instruction on weekends. A reasonable statewide standard governing the utilization of part-time and adjunct faculty is needed badly.

Facilities and Equipment

Although some community colleges have new buildings which can accommodate the latest teaching technologies, allocation of space remains a problem. At some colleges, faculty do not have a place to prepare instructional materials with copying machines or a paper cutter. Not all faculty have offices, and some have offices of less than forty square feet. On another campus, classrooms have been created from storage space. When a tax levy is voted down, problems with space become chronic. At one college, classes are offered which have no assigned classroom space.

Although they are expected to prepare students for the workplace, community colleges lack state-of-the-art equipment. On some campuses, equipment replacement is rotated among programs. On one campus, money for equipment hasn't increased in fifteen years. Another campus has purchased no equipment since December, 1990, when faculty had an equipment allowance of $150. Very little can be purchased for such a sum. On many campuses, the demand for fiber optics interconnection reduced budgets for equipment, particularly in Science Education, until the legislature acted. English, Social Science and the library are often neglected when new equipment is ordered. Where equipment is concerned, Iowa's community colleges are just limping along.

Computers are not available in every classroom or faculty office. Existing equipment, such as printers and software, is often obsolete. One classroom is using a first-generation Tandy; its Physics department has no computer at all. Obsolete equipment requires constant attention, reducing time for instruction. New equipment requires time for training. Faculty need support for hardware and software in order to bring instruction into the Twenty-first Century. We need for computers in all instructional settings, and the absence of modern computers contributes to overload. The operation of computers -- such as a Computer Assisted Design program on a network -- requires considerable faculty time, which should be calculated into work load. While some campuses are supportive, others act as if technology were optional.

Recurring Themes

Colleges are growing without assured and sufficient financing. This places stress on faculty by creating conditions of perpetual overload. It also creates problems with equipment and facilities. Increasingly, the curriculum is changing to serve students with high tech aspirations as well as those with traditional goals. This has led to a broader curriculum at a time when students and business are seeking narrower training. If something is not done to set high expectations and improve quality, Iowa's community colleges will fail those who have the most to learn.

Recommendations for Improvement

* Provide a diagnostic inventory with individual counseling for every entering student.

* Provide remedial centers on all campuses.

* Provide institutional data to faculty and counselors about student completion rates so that students may be advised effectively about the probabilities attached to entering or forgoing remedial courses.

* Maintain a counselor/student ratio of 400:1 or less.

* Set limits on course registration based on factors related to the academic characteristics of the course after consultation with faculty.

* Insure that quality is considered when decisions are made.

* Limit part-time and adjunct faculty to no more than thirty percent of total contact hours in degree courses, including laboratories.

* Provide all faculty with offices.

* Provide part-time faculty with offices and compensate them to maintain regular hours and participate in campus governance.

* Provide faculty with a fully equipped workroom for the preparation of instructional materials.

* Provide new equipment to all programs.

* Eliminate obsolete equipment to improve productivity.

* Provide a modern computer for every office and classroom.

* Set the work load for vocational/technical faculty equal to the standard work load for Arts and Science faculty.

* End the practice of assigning additional classes above the "maximum" work load.

* Provide work load credit for laboratories which require supervision; operation of computer networks; administration of student practica; and other regular faculty responsibilities.

* Provide preparation time for all faculty.

* Limit the number of academic preparations for all faculty.

* Relieve faculty of non-instructional responsibilities and paper work through increased paraprofessional and administrative support.

* Provide training for working with computer software and hardware.

II. Leadership and Governance

Leadership is Uneven

At some colleges, administrators are supportive and communicative. Mission statements exist, and access to decisionmakers and trustees is routinely available. Long-range planning has led to innovation. Consultation is open, unguarded and frequent. A positive learning climate exists. Faculty are invited to attend board meetings and make presentations. Violations of academic freedom are rare. Collective bargaining operates smoothly. Faculty have time to serve as leaders in the community. Most managers have prior experience as educators in community colleges. Efforts are made to implement modern management styles through Total Quality Management (TQM).

But at other colleges, long-range planning fails to result in innovation. Organizational charts are in constant turmoil. Responsibilities are perpetually shifting, to the detriment of decisionmaking. Communication is a birthday card from the president, signed by his secretary. Faculty are not involved in the hiring of administrators. Administrators lack teaching experience at any level. Deficits are chronic and concealed. The number of administrators increases while the number of faculty declines or is stable. Department heads are appointed rather than elected. Shared governance does not exist. There are no faculty on many college committees. Administrators openly oppose and discourage membership in the faculty Association, in violation of labor and right-to-work laws. Faculty are discouraged, under threat of reprisal, from contacting board members; attending public meetings; or raising issues with administrators or other faculty. Licensure rules are routinely ignored. Conflicts exist between one college and another, and some have become feuds at the legislature.

Total Quality Management (TQM)

TQM holds promise for improving governance. Its objective is to empower first-level decisionmakers such as faculty. But it cannot succeed without a prior commitment from top management. Many campuses are attempting to force bottom-up decisionmaking with top-down decisions. Meetings are held during instructional time when many faculty cannot attend. At one campus, faculty are being asked to participate in TQM while being barred from attending board meetings. Faculty are not being consulted in the implementation of a program whose aim is to insure that faculty are consulted. Such practices are counter-productive.

Trustees

Many trustees are sincerely engaged in improving colleges and their communities; but some boards meet during the day, when faculty and citizens are working and cannot attend meetings. Some have no written policies guaranteeing the right of faculty to attend their meetings or present issues. Although progress has been made, women remain under-represented on community college boards. Some boards attempt to micromanage; others fail to provide accountability. Parochial interests often take priority, and being agreeable may take precedence over bringing change. Board members may lack sufficient expertise to know what information to request so they can make enlightened decisions.

Faculty

When faculty fail to raise issues of quality, quality declines by default. Although we would like more authority in operational decisionmaking, we are often unwilling to lose flexibility in instruction in return for influence in operations. Although we ask to share authority, we fail to develop consistent leadership within our ranks. For change to succeed, faculty must be willing to do some things differently.

Change has been positive in some areas. Deep divisions once existed between faculty and administrators. On many campuses, faculty have confidence in the ability of administrators, even when they have doubts about support. Formerly, there was antagonism among branch campuses and a canyon between Vocational/Technical faculty and those in Arts and Sciences. At times, it seemed that whatever position one group took, the other would oppose it. This has largely been eliminated.

The realization is growing that faculty need one another. This is the result of maturing attitudes and shifts in curriculum. The curriculum is no longer two competing tracks, but one body of course work in applied technical education, which is offered at several locations. This has helped to unify the campus.

Declining Standards

At some colleges, there are differences between administrators and faculty on the meaning and operation of the grading system. Students receive A or B, and no one receives D, E or F. Student performance erodes when faculty are prevented from discriminating on the basis of merit. Many students won't and don't read; some lack basic reading skills. Students enter the open door, but are given little direction once inside the college. Technology brings a paradox, in that it attracts a greater percent of traditional students, but presents less student responsibility, no concept of failure, and no penalties for non-performance.

At some colleges, faculty are expected to give good grades to maintain enrollment. When students from these colleges transfer to a major Iowa university, their grade-point average is one or more points lower than their community college. A "no fail" policy has led some administrators to change student grades and refund tuition up to two years after a failing grade has been recorded. Such a policy invites students to postpone learning indefinitely, without consequence. Fortunately, such policies are an exception. At most colleges, deans are supportive about grading and decline to second-guess faculty on academic decisions. But most campuses still lack effective management information systems which would allow faculty to counsel students on the basis of concrete data about the probable outcomes of the various academic options which are available to students.

A fear of lawsuits has led to administrative timidity in enforcing basic rules of decorum. At one campus, students have thrown a punch at faculty without being disciplined. Students who are a clear and present danger to others have been admitted to class. Frivolous discrimination complaints have been filed against faculty who enforce academic standards. Internal review procedures shift the burden of proof onto the accused. These situations undermine faculty authority.

Academic standards have been violated on some campuses by a concern for athletics. It is immoral to treat athletes as a commodity to be used and discarded. It is unprofessional to ask for or provide preferential treatment to athletes. On one campus, members of the baseball team cheated together on two successive tests, but administration declined to take action; the students are still playing on the team. On another campus, a student was given a passing grade by a coach in a non-existent course offered during the break between two semesters in order to maintain eligibility for basketball. The student was not enrolled at the community college, but at a nearby university.

A decline in standards is partly the result of a change in culture. The largest campuses have become corporate. Decisions are made on the basis of quantifiable criteria at the expense of the qualitative. Administrators are concerned with marketshare and not quality. Enrollments in full time equivalents seem more important than learning. Even at smaller campuses, bricks and mortar seem more important than people. It is as if institutions which were created to serve people now require people to serve them. This must change if community colleges are to fulfill their mission.

Except for rare lapses, Iowa's community colleges do not have serious problems with academic freedom. Administrators and trustees do not interfere with faculty in instruction. But the legalistic context of institutional life sometimes intrudes. Two colleges attempted to select a text for faculty, on the grounds that this would be a convenience for the bookstore. This was announced by memo, with no faculty consultation. On another campus, grading schedules were changed to accommodate the data processing unit. On another campus, faculty were directed to implement a syllabus from a different community college. On another campus, administrators "adjusted" the hours needed to qualify in some subject areas. Colleges need to appreciate that ancillary services exist to support instruction, not to control it.

Administrators lack the expertise to intrude into the specialized courses which are offered by a college. Under ordinary circumstances, **special qualifications** allow faculty to control teaching and select materials. As a legal matter, only licensed faculty may select materials, develop curriculum, teach or evaluate students. We sometimes take this freedom to excess by insulating ourselves from accountability. Insisting on academic freedom can squelch fair evaluation when a instructor is in need of assistance for improvement. But academic freedom is the first priority, because it is the precondition of quality. It permits us to exchange new ideas and empowers us to improve instruction without seeking time-consuming permission. This is a boon to teaching, whether in Arts and Sciences or Vocational/Technical education.

Recurring Themes

Most community colleges are unable to commit to decentralization, and some are not making the attempt. The most prevalent administrative style is directive. The most frequent faculty complaint is that decisionmaking is top down and autocratic. In such a mode, every issue becomes one of power and control. Our colleges need a new style of leadership to succeed in a world where flexibility is a virtue. Change is rapid, but many maintain the status quo. A "power and control" strategy leads to failure in today's global economy. Change is needed, and change will come. Faculty, administrators and trustees need to work together to insure that new styles of decisionmaking arrive in time to make a difference.

Recommendations for Improvement

* Nurture shared governance.

* Decentralize decisionmaking.

* Replace confrontation and directiveness with cooperation and collaboration.

* Implement the recommendations of long-range planning.

* Involve faculty in the selection of administrators.

* Elect first-level department heads.

* Require that administrators have a background in community colleges.

* Include faculty on committees which make plenary decisions.

* Involve faculty in the development of any program involving quality circles or TQM.

* Encourage faculty to attend meetings of the board of trustees and provide an opportunity for their representatives to be heard.

* Schedule board meetings for evenings.

* Require that data presented to trustees is in a form which is useful for decisionmaking.

* Involve trustees in problem-solving and policy development.

* Insure that administration increases at a slower rate than faculty or enrollment.

* Provide opportunities for faculty to interact among campuses and divisions.

* Set and enforce high standards and expectations for academic achievement, academic honesty and personal behavior.

* Enforce faculty's exclusive statutory right to set grades.

* Enforce licensure rules relating to qualifications and professional ethics.

* Investigate and dismiss frivolous complaints against the college or employees prior to formal hearings.

* Prohibit preferential treatment of athletes.

* Raise faculty salaries to the national average for community college faculty.

* Put people ahead of property or institutional interests.

III. The Community College Mission

The Instructional Mission

Iowa's community colleges were created to serve those who had no other options. This mission is alive and well. Trustees, faculty and administrators remain committed to building human capacity among those who have the most to learn. The door is still open, and students are still walking through it in increasing numbers.

This mission has never been financed with assured and sufficient state and local resources. The result has been a chronic problem with start-up costs for new programs, lack of equipment, lack of training for faculty, low faculty salaries, large classes, lack of remedial programs and unnecessarily high drop-out rates. Because community colleges have never been a high priority at the State House, the original purpose of community colleges remains to be fulfilled.

Redefining the Mission

The goal is no longer mastery of subject matter, but learning how to make up one's own mind. The mission of the colleges is not to serve business, but to develop people. The mission of faculty is to develop a curriculum which serves students in their lives, jobs and communities.

The new emphasis on technical training creates a paradox. On the one hand, community colleges and businesses want people who are trained in highly technical areas. On the other hand, most of the need and enrollment is in traditional areas. As technical education gains in priority, traditional students get less of what they need because of a lack of state support.

One difficulty is that the Liberal Arts are no longer liberal learning. Today's learners are visually literate and accustomed to receiving information and instruction through a TV screen. A new instructional method is needed, and that method is human contact. An emphasis on high tech requires an emphasis on high touch. Change is necessary in all instructional areas.

The need is particularly obvious in Nursing. Those who provide health care need preparation which develops self-confidence and self-esteem. Thus, a high tech environment is dependent on human contact. As programs in Nursing demonstrate, high tech can never replace high touch; high touch is more necessary than ever in a technological environment. Instruction will remain a human business despite technology, because it is a human business to get people to believe in themselves.

The responsibility of faculty is to redefine the curriculum in terms of applied technical education using the latest instructional and industrial technology so as to provide as much individual attention as possible. A narrow "training" expectation from students or business complicates and retards this necessary transformation.

The Economic Development Mission

Even though the instructional potential of community colleges has not yet been realized, a new mission has been added. State government expects community colleges to operate as business incubators and engines of local economic development. Political leaders say that this mission is reasonably related to the practical orientation of the community college's instructional programs. Besides, there is no other subdivision of government which could do the work. Consequently, state government has assigned the task of local economic development to community colleges.

Like our original mission, our new mission also lacks an assured and sufficient source of revenue. On some campuses, faculty feel "out of the loop" with respect to economic development. Many say that they have never been informed about its goals and methods. The relationship to instructional programs has not always been made clear. Partnerships with business may not be real or may not produce reciprocal benefits for instruction.

The goals of business often make no allowance for the kind of broad educational preparation which produces the flexibility which business says it wants. The mission of community colleges is not to train, but to educate, so that people can improve constantly. The object is not to train people for business at public expense, but to teach people how to think, so that they can contribute fully to their jobs, lives and society.

Students need broad preparation to promote economic competitiveness. If business wants training only, it will shortchange itself. In today's economy, short-term thinking is decreasingly viable as a strategy. The same holds true for students, whose first commitment is often to narrow training. Students in Nursing, for example, want mainly to learn what is related to licensure requirements and not what is needed to thrive as a practitioner. It is not a pleasure to teach an enriched curriculum to those who have narrow objectives.

When the objectives of both students and business are narrow, the result can be failure in high tech areas. Vocational/Technical courses are now so advanced that higher level skills in the Arts and Sciences are routinely required. Calculus, technical writing and general knowledge are needed to optimize applications and effectiveness. Students need to know where they fit in the world in order to work well in it. They need to know multiculturalism, anthropology, citizenship and just plain getting along -- particularly if they have few skills in these areas.

Concerns about Economic Development

Some partnerships with business are real. There are benefits in Adult Education, Vocational/Technical Education and Arts and Sciences. A new business training center can help a college with needed software, while the college prepares and sorts students for real jobs. After a training program is in place, faculty receive calls from the field for assistance. This provides faculty with a way to keep current in their areas of expertise and develops viable networks of support.

But while partnerships bring new equipment, they may also bring obsolete equipment which is nothing more than a tax write off. Economic development may create expensive white elephants, as on one campus where a 250-seat auditorium was built as a convention center -- with no connection to instruction. There is financial risk to the college if business declines and incubators fail. There is a more subtle risk that involvement with business will reinforce a "bigger is better" mentality, as if growth were the answer to all problems.

On some campuses, faculty are not allowed to teach with computers which were purchased for programs with business. Classrooms are lost to offices for economic development. Training programs may have no connection with a campus when both students and trainers come from a business which runs a training program on its own plant. While the college should develop partnerships with business, some doubt whether colleges should be recruiting personnel for business.

While a college may profit from its connection with economic development, there is a danger that its mission will be redefined as job training. Generating jobs and meeting the needs of business is not the only priority of a community college and not the most important one. Unless our colleges fulfill their main purpose of educating students, secondary goals will fail also.

Economic development creates new responsibilities which take up administrative time in a way that has nothing to do with education. One consequence is that the number of administrators is rising faster than the number of faculty on some campuses. When special enterprises compete for administrative attention, visible programs, such as radio stations, take precedence over instruction. Special programs create a drain on resources and administrative time without contributing anything to instruction. This makes communication increasingly difficult. Faculty requests are filtered; its influence declines. Administration becomes fragmented, partly because of a failure to delegate instructional tasks to faculty or economic development to specialists.

When economic development and instruction are not financed adequately, economic development drains resources from instruction. Many faculty doubt that economic development costs are being tracked in the budget. Some ask if the costs are knowable, since liability is open-ended. No one has seen evidence that the programs are paying for themselves. The training programs may not be cost effective, since each new job costs in excess of $30,000 to create. The practice of subsidizing lower salaries for new employees during their training period may not be equitable. The practice of having a college receive a training fee when no training is done on campus and no college personnel are involved may be illegal, immoral or deceptive.

Recurring Themes

The community college's commitment to nontraditional students is alive and underfinanced. New missions, particularly in economic development and other ancillary enterprises, provide a needed contribution to society and the economy. But this may be occurring at the expense of instruction, particularly since the new responsibilities are not being adequately financed. While economic development holds great promise, neither economic development nor instruction can realize its potential unless both are financed adequately.

Recommendations for Improvement

* Insure that instruction is the first priority.

* Make improvement of instruction a continuing priority.

* Redefine the curriculum through technology to broaden goals and provide personalized instruction to each student.

* Insure that economic development is not subsidized, directly or indirectly, by instruction, and is self-financing.

* Explain the goals, procedures and financing of economic development programs to faculty.

* Promote collaborations with business which are reciprocal while avoiding those which are unilateral or morally dubious.

* Allow equipment purchased for business programs to be used for instruction whenever scheduling permits.

* Divest ancillary enterprises which have no direct benefit or relationship to instruction so as to focus administrative attention and time on instruction.

IV. Professional Development

A Dearth of Lack

Faculty have little opportunity for professional development or in-service. Travel to national meetings of subject-matter groups is not available to all on all campuses. Direct university instruction involves long drives to campus centers, particularly in Western Iowa. Telenet is inadequate. Classes in higher education core areas fill quickly, leaving people without alternatives on mandatory licensure requirements. Few courses are available in the summer.

Training updates for faculty are available to faculty in Vocational/Technical areas, but these are paid for by such companies as General Motors or Ford. Although these are welcome, faculty may not have opportunities beyond them. Professional development should not be limited to, or rely on, the resources and objectives of others.

Area Education Agencies do not see it as their role to deliver professional development to those involved in adult learning. Some do not send their catalogue of professional development courses to community college faculty. Some courses, like human relations, fail to relate to the problems of those who teach adult learners.

Licensure is useful as a way of establishing and enforcing professional standards. But licensure cannot succeed without support from administration. Administrators view licensure as a hindrance and an imposition. Few administrators or faculty are aware of their rights or responsibilities as licensed practitioners. Faculty support licensure as the precondition of professional status upon which both academic freedom and tenure are legally contingent. Licensure cannot be abolished without reducing standards or the status of faculty as professionals.

But preparation for our license is outmoded and ineffective. Courses do not relate reasonably to what a community college faculty member needs to know and be able to do with respect to adult learners. Core courses seemed designed to generate resources for universities rather than to promote growth or provide a service. Many are taught by persons who have no community college experience, and the quality among them can vary widely. Licensure renewal requirements are not related to the actual career development of faculty, since they do not relate to the acquisition of additional teaching skills.

The New Teachers Workshop is available for new teachers. However, this program has limits. It is not open to part-time faculty or adjuncts. It is intended primarily for the Vocational/Technical instructor who has no prior teaching experience or teacher education preparation. It provides little assistance for the Arts and Science instructor, who may be experienced as a teacher but lacking expertise in teaching adult learners.

Since it is only one week long, the New Teachers Workshop cannot deal with the many techniques which are specific to specialized subject matters. Such knowledge of methods is as central to the teaching of Vocational/Technical subjects as to the teaching of Liberal Arts. No way has yet been found to provide faculty with training specific to their subjects.

No way has been found to provide support for the beginning teacher on campus. Mentors do not exist. There is no released time for mentor or new teachers to interact. Other than the New Teachers Workshop, the new community college instructor is left without support. If one has never taught at all, the preparation program consists largely of being given an office, a class list and a schedule. New faculty are expected to sink or swim without assistance. In many cases, a new teacher may be teaching in a subject area which no one else is teaching. In such cases, there is no one to ask to help.

Recurring Themes

Faculty lack viable opportunities for professional growth in their preparation for licensure, campus-based in-service, and licensure-based professional development. Preparation in methods is not available before an instructor begins teaching, so that bad habits may be avoided. Mentor programs are not available for beginning instructors. Existing preparation does not relate to adult learning or methods required in specialized subject matter areas.

Preparation is not useful to full-time and part-time faculty in both Vocational/Technical education and Arts and Sciences. Meaningful in-service, available on campus, does not exist. Professional renewal, related to actual career growth and needs, does not exist. University courses are irrelevant, over-enrolled, remote or taught by those who have no experience in community colleges.

Faculty have few opportunities to learn how to transform curriculum through technology; provide personalized and individual attention to students; and transform colleges from corporate to collegially decentralized learning environments through effective shared governance. Area Education Agencies do not provide support to those who teach adults. No delivery system exists to provide community college faculty with relevant preparation, in-service and professional development.

Recommendations for Improvement

* Provide regular professional development opportunities for faculty, including graduate courses, training updates, self-directed learning and attendance at national subject matter meetings.

* Establish mentor programs with released time for beginning teacher and mentor.

* Restructure core requirements for licensure so that these are reasonably related to the realities of practice for community college faculty.

* Maintain licensure as the surest way of promoting professional recognition and status.

* Insure that core courses for licensure are taught by persons who are licensed and have had previous experience in community colleges.

* Relate licensure renewal requirements to the normal career growth of faculty and the development of an expanding repertoire of skills.

* Provide subject matter specific methods courses for all new faculty.

* Strengthen and broaden the New Teachers Workshop.

* Explore the fiber optics network as a way of providing professional development networking and seminars.

* Educate faculty in instructional technology, methods of individual instruction for the adult learner, shared governance, professional ethics and techniques of organizational transformation in the licensure core.

* Establish local committees of licensed faculty and administrators to plan and implement staff development.

* Make Area Education Agency educational offerings sensitive to the needs of those who teach adults and advertise these among community college faculty.

B. Analysis of Problems

The problems presented in this report have a common factor: Community colleges and their mission are at risk because of a lack of quality in major operating systems. Whether the issue is conditions of teaching, leadership, governance, mission, professional development, the underlying issue is quality.

Our problems are chronic. Difficulties with class size; overload; start-up costs for new programs; equipment; space; low salaries; directive governance and the rest have existed since community colleges were created twenty-five years ago. The missions and the colleges cannot be improved until quality is improved in these major systems.

But quality is declining. Increasing enrollments and new missions are destabilizing the status quo. The problems are greatest at colleges with the greatest growth. But all colleges are experiencing increasing responsibilities in instruction and economic development with insufficient resources.

Twenty-five years of experience indicates that community colleges cannot solve these problems by themselves. The present structure of support amply illustrates that colleges lack the means to achieve and maintain quality. Iowa's community colleges have reached the limits of the present arrangements to provide quality, assume new responsibilities or realize existing mandates. Unless changes in structure are forthcoming -- in finance, organization, governance, management style, instructional design, equipment replacement and professional development -- Iowa's community colleges will slide backwards. In today's climate, a failure to change brings failure.

The lack of quality in major systems can be traced to a single cause: a lack of assured and sufficient financial support. Whether the issue is start-up costs for new programs; low faculty salaries; lack of equipment; professional development; instructional quality; or economic development; there is no assured and sufficient fiscal support. Until such support is forthcoming, the stalemate of the status quo cannot be unravelled.

The challenge is to find the political will to provide community colleges with an assured and sufficient source of financing. While some money can be redirected from improved operations and productivity, most will need to come from new revenue. While money does not solve all problems, it does solve problems caused by a lack of money. Community colleges have the kinds of problems that have been caused and can be solved by money.

The source for such money is state government. Only state government can provide enough financial support to renew the colleges' infrastructure. New support should be targeted to areas which have the greatest leverage for improving quality such as reducing class size, reducing faculty preparations, and individualizing curriculum.

C. Solving the Problem with Quality

New support will not become a reality until collaboration becomes a standard procedure for the public, faculty, administrators, trustees, students, business and political leaders. We can do much more together than any can do alone. Collaboration is needed for massive structural change.

The first step is a unifying plan. The following are offered tentatively as a first step to such a plan. We hope that there will be converging responses. Our aim is not to be dogmatic or inflexible, but to express the best thinking of faculty at this time.

To restructure and revitalize community colleges, the state of Iowa needs to -

* Provide adequate and sufficient finance for -

- start-up and design costs in new academic and economic development programs.

- scheduled equipment replacement and purchase of new equipment.

- limits on class size and standard work load for faculty.

- equalization of work load for Vocational/Technical faculty.

- professional development.

- faculty salaries.

- operations.

* Make economic development self-financing without direct or indirect subsidy from instruction.

* Create pilot programs for demonstrating and implementing comprehensive college transformation from corporate to collegiate learning and governance environments.

* Provide support for new mentor programs for beginning faculty and relevant core and renewal requirements in licensure.

* Create five comprehensive and fully autonomous community college districts, each with its own elected governing board.

Such a program may cost as much as $300 million. The equalization of Vocational/Technical work load alone might cost $9 to $17 million. Very little of this can be subsumed from regular anticipated appropriations.

In the absence of a new commitment, community colleges face a no-win choice. They may continue to go on as they have. This will reduce quality and the capacity to serve the needs of a unique student body. Or colleges can limit enrollment to bring quality in line with resources. This, too, reduces capacity to serve students. In either case, this conclusion is inevitable: Unless new support is forthcoming, the community college mission cannot be fulfilled. If society wants this mission to be realized, it needs to provide a new level of support which is consistent with increased enrollment and responsibilities.

D. Hopes for the Future.

When we consider the future as faculty, we see it in personal terms. We would like to work in an atmosphere where we are treated and respected as professionals. We want to be helpful to students and provide a service to persons in the community. We want to be creative, flexible, innovative, resourceful and more effective as teachers.

We want the name of our college to be a household word in our communities. We want to earn a professional wage. We want our colleges to change with the times and stay ahead of them. We want our students to succeed and to be effective on the first day of employment. We want them to think for themselves, to be literate, and to know how to learn as lifelong learners.

We would like to have enough equipment for our classes, enough computers, and enough space to work. We want our campus to be a safe place for a mind to grow and explore. We want to make a difference in the lives of our students. We want more time with our families. We want less stress in our working lives. We want more support from administration and less direction.

We want flexibility in the working environment and the opportunity to take risks. We want the quality of education for students to be the first priority. We want fiber optics to be used in the right way, and we want to be consulted about the right way to use it. We want time to interact with students, to develop new courses and to prepare for existing courses.

We want to work with others to make things better. We want to be better. We want to keep growing. We are prepared to do things differently to make things better. We are ready to work in easy partnerships with anyone who is ready to improve the quality of community colleges.

With cooperation and collaboration among concerned Iowans, the economic and educational goals of Iowa can be met through the programs which your community colleges are trying to deliver and would like to deliver. It's all a matter of quality.